

Wycombe face the facts

WYCOMBE Wanderers manager Brian Lee called in his players for a special Sunday morning training session yesterday... then told them they haven't a hope of beating Middlesbrough in Saturday's F.A. Cup third round.

It sounds like a bizarre start to the week in which the Rothmans Isthmian League amateurs take on the joint leaders of the First Division on their notorious sloping pitch.

But far from being defeatist, Lee—a talented coach who has rubbed shoulders with the best

By Pat Gibson

brains in English football—is adopting a realistic attitude that must be the right one.

Lee, former deputy director of the Lillieshall National Recreation Centre, now director of Bisham Abbey Sports Centre and in his sixth season as Wycombe manager, watched Middlesbrough draw 1-1 at Everton on Saturday.

His impressions? "It would be very arrogant of me to say anything against them," said Lee. "They are so good, well organised, well disciplined."

With Lee holding such a high opinion of Jack Charlton's team what was the purpose of Wycombe's Sunday morning sermon?

"I was trying to impress on

them that they haven't really got a chance on Saturday," said Lee with disarming candour.

"I want to make sure that Middlesbrough win this game; or, in other words, I want to be certain that we don't concede it."

There seems little chance of that. There are enough brains in Lee's squad—half of them are schoolteachers—to work out a problem or two for big Jack and his men.

And Lee's ability as a coach speaks for itself in Wycombe's record since he took over.

In his five seasons, they have won the Isthmian League championship three times, been runners-up once and finished fourth once. This season they're lying third with a match in hand.

SHOPPED? NOT OUR FANS, SAY WYCOMBE

GIANT-KILLERS Wycombe Wanderers yesterday denied that local businessmen have bought up blocks of tickets for tomorrow's glamour FA Cup-tie against First Division Middlesbrough and are using them to "blackmail" the ordinary fan.

Dozens of angry Wycombe supporters have contacted Mirror Sport to complain they have been unable to get a ticket for the biggest day in the Isthmian League club's history.

And most of them insisted that the shortage was caused by businessmen buying up more than 100 each—which they are selling to customers who buy goods in their stores.

Wycombe treasurer Roger Lee described these claims as "absolute bloody rubbish."

Lee told me: "When we

By JACK STEGGLES

sought the support of local businessmen at the start of the season they did not want to know about us.

"In view of that, is it likely that we would do anything to help them at a time like this? I have been refusing to give them even one seat in the stand.

Revealed

"We made it quite clear when our tickets were going on sale and people asking for large numbers were known to us."

Lee revealed that he still has tickets. Middlesbrough returned 1,500 and those not sold last night will be available at the ground today.